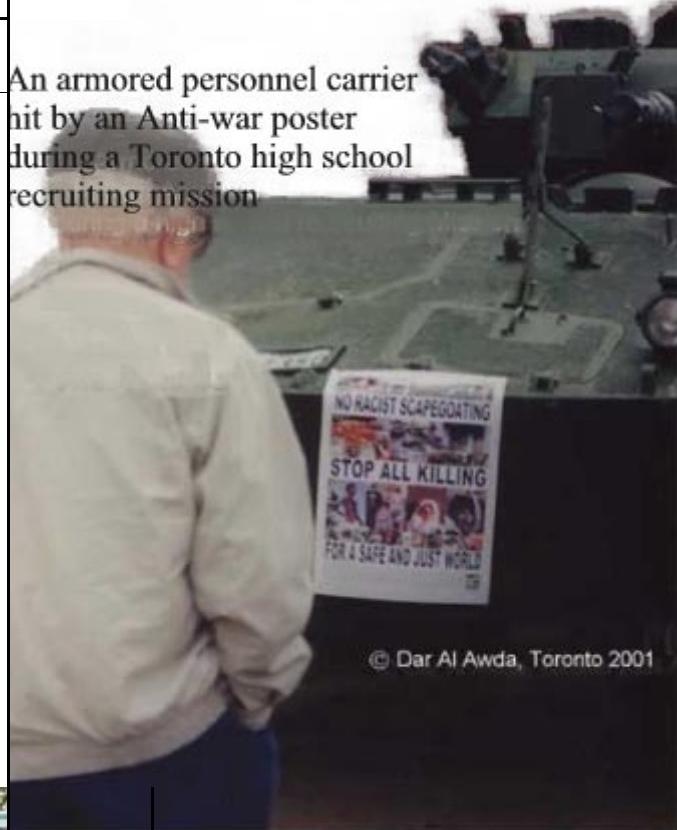


Community action notes

INFORMATION
AND
RESOURCES
AGAINST
WAR
AND RACISM

An armored personnel carrier hit by an Anti-war poster during a Toronto high school recruiting mission



© Dar Al Awda, Toronto 2001



November 13, 2001

Issue # 3

Who we are:



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COMMUNITY ACTION NOTES

information & resources against war and racism

Community Action Notes is intended to be a resource for community networking, outreach and information-sharing around organizing related to the events of September 11th and their aftermath.

Please send us information about events, meetings, & demos for upcoming issues. Longer articles or analysis are also welcome.

Brought to you by
the heads up collective

For more copies, to get involved or to contribute information, please email:

colours@tao.ca

resources

HATE CRIME HOTLINE

Have you been assaulted or threatened because you are of South Asian origin?

Report it:

- Call (416) 979-8611 CASSA Hate Hotline
- 911 Emergency
- Metro Toronto Police (416) 808-2222 (non emergency)

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)



HATE CRIME PROJECT -- SAY NO TO HATE

Are you a South Asian youth 15-25? Interested in writing, research, video and web design? Or in issues of racism and hate crime? Experience the power of video, explore a database or join a network. Develop an interactive web site for youth. Ever been the victim of a hate crime or know someone who has? Want to do something about racism and hate crime? Want to learn skills FREE?

Fight race-based hate with others. It is your chance to be heard! Say "NO" to hate this Fall! Contact Us:

Email: Ahmad at ahmad@spectranet.ca
Phone: Lalita at (905) 567-8611

Phone: Soni at (416) 979-8611
Email: Soni at soni@cassa.on.ca

Check us out on the web: <http://www.cassa.on.ca/SayNotoHate.html>

Meetings for this group are held:

*TIME: Fridays at 3:30 LOCATION: CASSA, 2 Carlton, SUITE 1004
On the corner of College and Yonge Street*

events

Post Durban Detox

A forum arranged to discuss the outcomes and next steps with regards to the World Conference Against Racism

When: December 1, 2001

Where: Metro Hall

Time 1:00 to 3:00 pm

For further inquiries please contact Soni Dasmohapatra
Youth Coordinator, Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
(CASSA)

Phone: (416) 979-8611, Email: soni@cassa.on.ca

The Canada-Colombia Solidarity Campaign (CCSC) presents:

OIL, WAR & RACISM: FROM COLOMBIA TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Friday, November 23, 7 PM
252 Bloor St. W. (OISE) Rm 2-214

Moderator: Winnie Ng, Canadian Labour Congress, Ontario Region

Manuel Rozental, co-founder of CCSC, on Colombia

Amir Hassanpour, Asst. Professor in the Dept. of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations at U of T, on the Middle East

Iliam Burbano & Sheila Wilmot , community anti-racist & international solidarity activists on organizing & resistance

Endorsed by: Canadian Arab Federation, Latin American Coalition Against Racism, CKLN 88.1 FM



Photo Exhibit: A Portrait of Afghanistan's Refugees

Arthur Haberman Art Gallery, Founders College York University

November 12 - 16 - 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Updated Info at <http://www.yorku.ca/psa/ourevents.htm>

From November 11-17, the Arthur Haberman Art Gallery (Founders College) will showcase the work of photographer Naureen Shah, who recently visited the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and captured images of the humanitarian crisis facing the Afghan people.

Through her work, she provides her audience with a glimpse into the plight of the Afghan refugees; torn between politics and poverty. The exhibit serves to highlight the need for humanitarian assistance and the sheer ingenuity and triumph of individuals living in dire conditions. Naureen's work has been featured on CTV's Canada AM and will be showcased on Amnesty International's website.

For those unable to make it to York University, the exhibit will be featured at the "Expressions of Oppressions" exhibit at the University of Toronto on November 21st, 2001 in the Hart House.

CIVIL LIBERTIES FORUM



*Does Canada's proposed anti-terrorism law go too far?
Will a North American security perimeter do more harm than good?
And at what cost to our civil liberties?*

Monday, November 19, 2001

6:30PM to 9:30PM

Toronto City Hall

Council Chamber

Free admission. Refreshments. Everyone welcome.

Moderated by MICHAEL VALPY

Participants include JEHAD AL-IWEIWI, Canadian Arab Federation . PAUL COPELAND, Law Union of Ontario . ALEX DAGG, UNITE . TAM GOOSSEN, Urban Alliance on Race Relations. LYNNE GORDON, Activist . ALI MALLAH, CUPE 79 . PAULINE SPENSER, Centre for Social Justice . SRI-GUGGAN SRI-SKANDA-RAJAH, Urban Alliance on Race Relations

Secret hearings? Frozen bank accounts? Snitch lines? Wiretaps? Secret lists? Trial by hearsay? Jailed 72 hours without access to legal advice? Racial profiling? IS THAT THE CANADA WE WANT?

For more info? TELEPHONE (416) 325-8300

SOUTH ASIAN YOUTH FOR AWARENESS (SAYA)

The South Asian Women's Center offers a space for young South Asian girls between the ages of 13 to 19 to gather and share their thoughts and concerns.

SAYA will soon offer an artistic venue such as dance and theater where girls can express themselves in another medium. SAYA is a fun space where your voice will be heard.

SAYA meets twice a month at the South Asian Women's Center.

SAYA's next gathering will take place at:

PHONE: (416) 537-2276
DATE: Saturday, Dec. 1, 2001
TIME: 12:00 to 2:00
LOCATION: 1332 Bloor Street West
Right off Lansdowne and Bloor

WEEKLY MULTI-FAITH VIGIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE ,

12 - 1 pm,
Liberal Party Headquarters,
10 St. Mary St.
(at Yonge, 2 blocks south of Bloor).

Join as us we urge our Government to cease involvement in attacks on Afghanistan and to instead take political, economic and legal action to address the root causes of terrorism.

Organized by Faith and Action,
actionfaith@hotmail.com,

Next vigil: November 16.

Coalition Against War and Racism invites you to get involved in actions & events to fight the racist attacks here in Canada & stop the racist war on Afghanistan by:

1 coming to a public forum Friday, Nov 30 on the impacts & implications of the changes to immigration & refugee law, the anti-terrorism bill and US foreign policy.

2 coming to our Monday night 7 p.m. meetings, 588 Queen W. (@ Bathurst).for more information, contact us at: 416-760-6574 or CAWR_Toronto@yahoo.ca

3 Join us at 1:00pm, Queen's Park Saturday Nov. 17 for the National Anti War Day and in front of the US Consulate at 1:00pm on Nov. 24, and December 1st.



**NOVEMBER 17th
NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION
FOR GLOBAL PEACE AND JUSTICE**

Called by the National September 11th Coalition

BIG PEACE MARCH IN TORONTO!!!

Called by the Toronto September 11 Peace Coalition

STOP THE WAR AGAINST AFGHANISTAN PEACE NOW!!

Come out for PEACE on Saturday, November 17th
1 pm at Queen's Park -- Rally with Speakers
March to Metro Hall -- more Speakers
(rally scheduled to end by approx. 4pm in respect of Ramadan)

To endorse or for more info: (416) 588-5555 Cdn Peace Alliance
E-mail: <mailto:toanti_war@hotmail.com>toanti_war@hotmail.com



FIREWEED: A Feminist Quarterly of Writing, Politics, Art and Culture
Special Issue: Women, Race, War and Resistance

War has been all around us since September 11th - inside of us and in the quiet of our minds - even when we try to pretend for a moment that this nightmare is not going on. For some of us who have left home and families in other countries torn apart by war - the extreme absence of peace - feelings of loss, sorrow and fear came long before September 11th. This suffering is not only from the aftershock and the flashbacks arising from watching those who have felt the same pain since the planes crashed that day; it also stems from knowing that loved ones back home may not be safe and may endure more bombings paid for with the same taxes you must pay. Or perhaps here in North America, this so-called place of "refuge," you may be feeling the heat of intensified racism towards brown skin and the Islamic faith. Women have always played the leading role creating a space that is safe for speaking out on dissenting views. And in this 21st century war the freedom to even express alternative views is being threatened. Opposing war is considered dissent, so in turn is the idea of living in peace. We ask women to raise their voices loud and clear and speak of the daily injustices, crimes and war waged upon many communities by the same super powers that now seek out a show down in an already devastated country.

These feelings are tumultuous and the dangers they represent are real. That's why we've dedicated a special issue of Fireweed -- Women, Race, War and Resistance -- to putting the voices of women who are surviving war (whether old scars or new wounds) into print. We invite submissions that include fiction, prose, essays, poetry, film, artwork, photographs and interviews. Our focus is on the stories of war themselves: who tells them and why, how they are interpreted, and received and what tensions and histories do they unveil or illuminate. How do specific ideologies, e.g. of gender, race, or nationality contribute to acts of war and responses to war? Submissions that examine local/global practices of anti-racism, political/media activism (video/film/art), feminist theatre, immigration policies, environmental racism and indigenous land struggles in response to war are especially welcome. Whether you have experienced war firsthand or have had your life shift into feeling like the enemy in your own hometown, we would like to hear from you. Please send your submissions: By mail to:

Firweed Women, Race, War and Resistance P.O. Box 279, Station B Toronto, Ontario M5T 2W2

Or preferably: E-mail a Rich Text Format file to: fireweed@web.ca PLEASE INCLUDE A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE (50wds.) and a full mailing address (with email address) with your submission. Deadline for submissions: DECEMBER 15, 2001

Resistance is fertile

A discussion about resistance to the war in Afghanistan featuring Jaggi Singh, Michael Manley, and Tara Atluri

Contact the Women's Centre (416) 978-8201

5:30-7:30 @ Central Tech

(Bathurst st. just south of Bloor)

The week of November 19th

**Come and check out the dub poet
NAH-EE-LAH from Montreal,
as well as artwork by Meghan Tran.
A celebration of art and
resistance!**

Contact for the UofT Women's Centre for more info
(416) 978-8201

analysis

The heads up collective interviewed Amina Sherazee from Downtown Legal Services. Amina is also an active member of the Coalition Against War and Racism

Bill C36 which is now in its second reading is going to affect many different laws, it affects 18 different statutes that will be amended or have consequential amendments. We have current measures that do take care of terrorism...the criminal code and the immigration act, and ten international conventions signed against terrorism. Bill C36 was introduced in the House of Commons on Oct.15 due to a United Nations Security Council resolution from the UN to test new measures to prevent terrorism

Amandeep: How does Bill C-36 define terrorism?

Amina: This Bill does not define terrorism, and that is one of the major problems with this Bill. Terrorist activity is defined much too broadly, and could take the form of any public activity without a permit. It significantly changes the idea of a protest. All of the anti-war/anti racism protests that have been taking place in front of the U.S. Consulate would be considered terrorist activity under Bill C-36 ...So if a group of people wants to get together in what is a public space and show their disagreement with government actions, this would be illegal.

This clause also includes terrorist activity inside or outside of Canada, so depending on the foreign policy of the day, certain organizations in certain countries would be considered terrorists and other organizations in other countries that may be oppressive regimes would not be considered terrorists...a good example of this is with Israel today. Civil disobedience would by definition be illegal as would wildcat strikes, and Greenpeace actions.

Amandeep: How will Bill C-36 allow police and government to detain anyone suspected without warrant or proof?

Amina: This Bill not only creates new offenses, but also creates new powers to enforce these new offenses, which will sanction racial profiling and targeting. One of the new provisions is preventative arrest. We have never had anything like this in Canada. Today an arrest can only be made if there is proof of intent to commit a crime. The procedure currently in place is that first the police must get evidence, then get a warrant and then make the arrest. This Bill says that they don't need a warrant or proof, just suspicion.

Amandeep: How will Bill C-36 specifically target people of colour especially Arabs and Muslims?

Amina: Well, the fact that these new provisions say that a warrant or proof is not needed and on only the basis of suspicion one can be arrested....people of colour are already regarded with suspicion due to the increased racism in the past weeks. It does not take a stretch of the imagination to realize that a Sikh man with a turban looks suspicious to them. Minoritized communities will be arrested and detained, questioned and detained without evidence and without a warrant under this legislation.

Amandeep: You were saying that there are several new provisions, one of which is preventative arrest. What are the others?

Amina: The right that we currently have to remain silent, especially until we see an attorney, or if we may be asked self-incriminating questions, is no longer granted under this Bill. So after one is arrested and detained without warrant or proof they are also denied their right to silence. The Bill gives the government and police the powers to "compel" the detained to speak. How do you make them speak?



Amandeep: Beat them?

Amina: So this Bill is basically sanctioning torture on a person that has only been arrested due to suspicion. Wire-tapping and use of foreign intelligence is also allowed under this Bill without so much as probable cause, and only reasonable suspicion. This is a threat to all immigrants especially refugees that have come to this country as political refugees. The Canadian government and CSIS can now check up on the files held by other governments of these refugees.

So if a person has come to Canada as a political refugee, escaping an oppressive regime in another country for example the paramilitaries in Columbia, where they may have been persecuted for fighting for their basic human rights, our government could now ask for information on this person from this oppressive regime. Of course it would be biased info, because they were a political dissident, and possibly considered a terrorist in that country. They could just as easily be pinned for sending money home to their mother who is resisting in a village. Again the lack of a proper definition of the word terrorism is a huge problem.

Amandeep: How will this Bill affect public access to government information?

Amina: The privacy commissioner has actually criticized the measures that this bill takes in this regard. This Bill would prohibit the release of personal information for what they are calling "security reasons. Right now I can ask any government agency for the information that they have on me....you have the right to see their info about yourself. If you are arrested under this new Bill C-36 and you ask "on what basis?" They can deny you the right to know why you have been arrested for reasons of national security. They can continue to prosecute under evidence, which is secret even to the prosecuted.

Amandeep: The government of Canada, namely justice minister Anne McClellan is stating that there is pressure to have this Bill pass quickly. Where is this pressure coming from?

Amina: The pressure is both internal and external. The U.S. has already passed an "anti terrorism" bill and is obviously pushing for Canada to pass this quickly as is NATO. But in my own personal opinion Sept. 11 is all they were looking for, so that they can legislate an increased intolerance and excessive force. If we see what happened at the APEC conference as well as in Quebec City, Windsor with the excessive force and the media it drew, now the police will be allowed to do anything they want. Our own government wants to make it more difficult for us to take part in international solidarity work and anti globalization movement. My ability to aid in the Chiapas movement will be taken away with this bill.

Amandeep: What are the benefits and drawbacks for lobbying a sunset clause?

Amina: Right now there are no provisions being made for what has been called a sunset clause or a timeline on this bill. There are three major reasons why I think it would be better to change this bill altogether rather than add a sunset clause or time restriction on the bill.

First of all, sunset clauses are meant to work in the U.S. system and not in the Canadian government. In our government the cabinet is forced to vote how the PM's want them to vote, for example Hedy Fry and Herb Dhaliwal.

Secondly, they can pick and choose what they want to sunset, so certain parts may be restricted and timelined, but the way that this bill has been written all the clauses are very intricately connected.

The third reason being that after giving all these new powers to the police and then taking them away after 2 years will be difficult, because they will definitely get used to them. These powers that grossly violate civil and human rights suspend our own human rights for far too long whether it be six months or two years especially when a state of emergency has not been declared.

Amandeep: What were the results of the Canadian Arab Federation's recent hearings with the Justice Committee?

Amina: The committee of Justice and Human rights is made up of 20 members of parliament to study the bill. It is currently in the second reading. After it passes the third reading it will go to the Senate

to be approved. Anne McClellan actually wants it approved by Christmas. When we met with this committee to voice our concerns we asked that the whole bill be scrapped altogether. We state that this is best because this government already has enough measures to deal with terrorism such as the criminal code and the immigration act. Also there is no state of emergency declared in this country. It erodes too many civil rights, is ill defined, and confusing and puts apples and oranges together. It places charities and criminal offenses together. There is also a Hate Crime provision in the Bill that makes it a crime to desecrate any place of worship such as mosques, gurudwaras, mandars or synagogues. This is one of the only great things about this Bill and is most likely only placed in it so it can be pointed out as a great Bill.

During our hearing the Bloc Quebecois MP and Bill Blaikie of the NDP agreed with us that this Bill should be scrapped, but the majority of the members told us that they are going to go through with it anyway so we should just tell them what changes we might want. So they just disregarded our concerns. They also have not given many other communities a chance to voice their own concerns. I told them that I don't want to come to them for reparations in ten years for the offenses they will make if these Bills are passed, like the Japanese internment.

Amandeep: What part of Bill C-36 do you personally find most offensive?

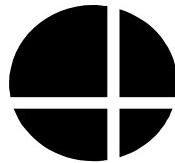
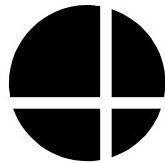
Amina: The lack of a definition of terrorism and the broad definition of terrorist activity is what I find most offensive, its just too broad. Terrorism is a group or individual armed against and targeting unarmed. Two groups that are both armed against each other is a fight, war, roulette, whatever you want to call it, but it is not terrorism. In Palestine, that is an armed resistance, a revolution, insurrection is not terrorism. Under the current definitions Louis Riel and Nelson Mandela would both be considered terrorists. If people had not sent money to ANC engaged in the opposition, apartheid may still exist. Legitimate struggles for human rights are called terrorism. The current definition undermines any fight for freedom and justice in the name of freedom of justice. I find that reprehensible.

A heads up about Immigration Bill C-11 Bill C-11 — Immigration and Refugee Protection Act Currently before the senate in its second reading

One of the principal aims of the new legislation, according to statements made by Immigration Minister Elinor Caplan when it was introduced in the House of Commons, is to facilitate the entry into Canada of the "best and the brightest" and to close the door to so-called undesirables and streamline the process for getting rid of people deemed unsuitable. The new immigration act includes measures which increase the powers of immigration officials to arrest and interrogate, including immediate security screening for all refugee claimants; to deny refugee status to those that they deem to be criminals, security risks or members of terrorist groups; and grants an increased scope for arrest, interrogation and deportation.

For more information, check out the Canadian Bar Association's website: http://www.cba.org/News/Archives/2001Archives/2001-10-02_submission.asp

announcements



Y.E.P. Youth Empowerment Program

Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre is committed to supporting Chinese Speaking and South Asian women to take greater control of their lives. RIWC provides culturally appropriate and linguistically specific settlement and counseling services with the use of community determined strategies, which are developed by women.

Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre would like to announce the creation of a new program. This innovative program will attempt to focus on the needs of youth (14-29 years of age) in the community. The goal of YEP is to take a proactive approach to helping youth enhance their life skills and raise their confidence through the use of empowering workshops, counseling as well as age appropriate social, recreational or cultural opportunities. There are many youth that may be in need of counseling for dealing with racism with racism, poverty, disabilities or sexuality issues. Our counselors can also assist these youth in addressing intergenerational conflicts and settlement services. RIWC offers many methods of obtaining counseling such as in person, over the phone and through e-mail.

YEP is in the process of implementing a 'Kids Helping Kids' program whereby youth could voluntarily contribute a few hours every week to help other students with their homework. This would allow them to fulfill the mandatory forty hours of volunteer work in high school. We would also like to implement weekly exercise classes such as yoga and kickboxing.

Our first event will be a free self-defence workshop that will be held on Thursday, November 2, 2001 at 4:30 pm. Wen-Do (A Women's Self-Defence Organization) will be providing this interactive demonstration at the main location of RIWC. METRAC (Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children) will also be present to provide an anti-violence workshop. This event will be open to all female youth. Refreshments and snacks will be served at 4:00 pm so that students can come by right after school.

If you are interested in our events or would like to volunteer with us, feel free to contact Shahina Sayani at:

Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre
1326 Gerrard St. East
Toronto, Ontario M4L 1Z1
Phone: (416) 465 6021 Ext. 35
Fax: (416) 465 4785
E-mail: ssayani@riwc.org

SALCO (South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario) : 1ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ALL ARE WELCOME!

SALCO is seeking to establish a legal clinic to respond to the needs of low-income South Asians in Toronto. Once established, the South Asian Legal Clinic will provide free public legal education seminars, referrals and individual representation to South Asians in a manner that responds to their unique and diverse cultural and linguistic needs.

WHEN: November 27th at 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: WOMEN'S HEALTH IN WOMEN'S HANDS, 2 Carleton Street, Suite 500.

CONTACTS: Anu Bakshi, Ph: 416 817-5268. Email: bakshianu@hotmail.com

Surksha Nayar, Ph: 416 706-0242., Email: surksha@yahoo.com

Translators, TTC tokens and childcare will be provided upon request. www.salc.net